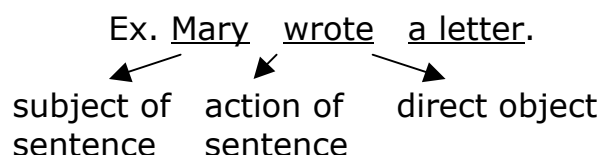




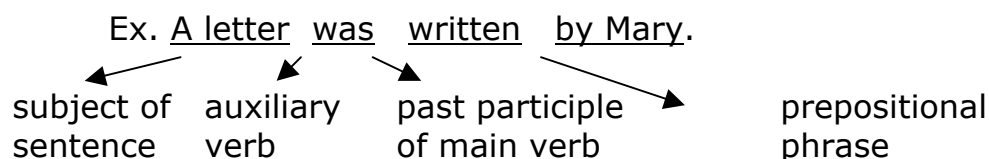
## Active versus Passive Voice

**Active Voice** means that the subject of the sentence is “active,” or performing the action. Using active voice makes your writing more direct, and since it usually uses fewer words than passive voice, it also makes your writing more concise and easier to understand.



In this example, the subject of the sentence, “Mary,” is performing an action.

**Passive voice** means that the subject of the sentence is acted upon. The person or thing performing the action often appears in a phrase that starts with *by*, and verbs require auxiliary verbs, such as *be*, *have*, or *will*, along with the past participle of the main verb.



In this example, the subject of the sentence, “a letter,” is NOT performing an action. The letter is not doing anything. Rather, the action, “writing,” is being performed on it *by* Mary.

Most instances of passive voice can be easily changed to the active voice. Look at the following examples.

Ex. The traffic jam was caused by an accident in the tunnel. (passive voice)  
 ⇒ An accident in the tunnel caused the traffic jam. (active voice)

Ex. The reason she tripped was that her shoes were untied. (passive voice)  
 ⇒ She tripped because she forgot to tie her shoes. (active voice)